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# homemakers' chat

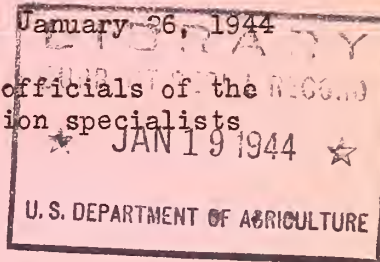
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U. S. DEPARTMENT  
OF AGRICULTURE

Wednesday, January 26, 1944

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Subject: "THERE'LL BE SOME CHANGES MADE" Information from officials of the Office of Price Administration, and food distribution specialists of the War Food Administration.



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A month from tomorrow...there'll be some changes made. For Sunday, February 27, is the day the new simplified rationing program begins for processed foods and meats, fats, and cheese. Of course, you've heard lots about the new ration tokens we'll be using...but that's not the only change. The value of all red and blue stamps will be increased to ten points each...and they'll all be good for about 12 weeks.

These changes are being made to simplify the rationing program, according to OPA policy...and to reduce the work of those who have to handle ration currency. They'll handle fewer stamps...and since all stamps will have the same point value, sorting and counting will be easier. They used to have to sort into two colors and four different values, and then multiply the number in each pile by 8, or 5, or 2, or 1. Now they'll separate the stamps into red and blue...count them...and then simply multiply by ten.

Beginning February 27, each red and blue stamp will be worth ten points. At present, as you know, the letters indicate the validity period of the stamps...the numbers show the point value. Under the revised program, both letter and number will show when the stamp is good. At this point...it might be a good idea if you got out your War Ration Book Four...when you look at the stamps it'll be clearer to you. For example...on February 27, five blue stamps with the number 8 become valid...that is, A8, B8, C8, D8, and E8. And at the same time, red stamps A3, B3, and C3 become valid.



Now a few words about when the stamps are good. Under the new schedule... blue stamps will regularly become valid on the first of each month...except that we'll begin to use the first group on February 27. Each group of blue stamps stays good until the twentieth of the second succeeding month. That means, the five stamps becoming valid February 27 are good until May 20...the next group is good from April first to June 20.

Red stamps become valid every two weeks, three at a time. The first three begin February 27. The second three come into use March 12. And all six of these red stamps will run until May 20. So both blue and red stamps will be good for about 12 weeks, and will expire on the same day.

Perhaps all these dates and numbers seem confusing now...but it'll be much easier for us homemakers to remember which stamps are good under the new system. We'll have a longer period over which to budget our points...so there won't be that last-minute rush to use up the stamps before they expire. Our grocers, too, will be glad...Now they have sudden heavy demands for rationed foods at the end of each ration period. Under the new system they'll be able to keep a more even supply in stock.

Perhaps you've noticed that we'll have a slightly different number of points under the simplified plan. Five blue stamps will be valid between February 27 and April first. Each is worth ten points, so that means fifty points for the 34 days. At present, we have 48 points for each month...As for red stamps, three will become good every two weeks. At ten points each, that means 30 points for the two weeks. Right now we're getting 16 points a week...but the amount of food you can get with both blue and red stamps will be the same. When the March point values are set, OPA will take into account these changes in number of points ...your 30 red points and 50 blue points will buy the same amount of food as you now can buy with your stamps.

Let's take a look at the new ration tokens. That's the part of this program





you've probably heard most about...but anyway here's the general idea. Each token will have a value of one point. They'll be made of a vulcanized fiber that's sturdy enough to stand up under a lot of use...it's so strong that it's also used for the facings on pile drivers. But it's not a strategic war material like metal or plastic. Each token will be very slightly more than half an inch in diameter, and quite thin. That makes each token a bit smaller than a dime...and about the size of the tax and street car tokens used in many parts of the country. Each token will have three layers of vulcanized fiber, the middle layer a distinctive yellow sandwiched between the two outer layers of either red or blue. On the red tokens you'll see the words, " OPA 1 Red Point". On the Blue tokens you'll see "OPA 1 Blue Point".

The OPA will distribute ration tokens only to the retailers. You'll see them first when you buy food with the new stamps after February 27... your grocer will give you tokens in change, the same way he gives you brown one-point stamps now... and you don't need to have an advance supply. These tokens will be used in the rationing programs for both processed foods and meats, fats, cheese, and other brown-point foods. The tokens will be good indefinitely.

Let's imagine for a moment what it'll be like to go shopping under the new program. Say you buy something worth eight points. You'll give any one of your valid stamps for it, since they're all worth ten points...though of course, you'll give blue stamps for processed foods, red points for meats, fats, and cheese. Your grocer will take your stamp and give you back in change two tokens of the same color as the stamp. Or suppose you buy groceries worth fifteen points. You give your grocer two stamps...and he'll give you five tokens in change. So you see, it's an easy system.

There are lots of advantages in using tokens. As you know, they're good indefinitely. You can use them in any store that sells rationed foods...and any member of the family living in your home can buy food with them. You could send your children to the store with ration tokens, leaving the ration books at home... you're less likely to lose your ration books this way. And OPA figures the new tokens won't add much weight to your pocketbook...in most cases you'll have less than five of each kind. But you won't get ration tokens in change for green and brown stamps...just for the blue and red ones.

So you can look forward to a simpler rationing program beginning February 27. Remember the three changes: ration tokens for change...all stamps worth ten points each...and all stamps good for about twelve weeks.

